

August 8th Meeting with Rob Sadowsky

Executive Director Bicycle Transportation Alliance – City of Portland

- Has been with BTA for 3 years
- Prior to that was with Chicago Active Transportation
- Not a fan of American League of Cyclists or BFC programs
- Does like PeoplePoweredMovement.org (Alliance for Biking and Walking) and bikehub.ca Vancouver
- Feels BFC misses the most important E –Equity
 - o Important that bicycle facilities be engineered for all communities regardless of age, gender, race
 - o Focus on infrastructure – that is the number 1 priority
- Therefore Engineering (infrastructure) is the most important E with bicycles physically separated from motorized vehicles wherever possible
- Can't win the cost/benefit argument so stay away from arguments about taxes or bike registration. "Once you have to explain, you lose."
 - o Expose yourself to bikes campaign based on the "expose yourself to art"
 - o Largest naked bike ride in the world, 15,000 participants
- Being bicycle friendly really means having a bigger, better vision of land use, what will being bicycle friendly do to shape the communities that people live in
- In order for people to support building bicycle infrastructure they need to be able to feel connected to it by visualizing how it will impact the street they live/work/commute on
- It has to be an emotional argument rather than intellectual or financial
- People need to be able to see themselves in the picture, to see images of their own streets not London or Amsterdam
- 90% of BTA members own a car, there is no us vs them
- BTA focuses on city of Portland and suburbs although mandate includes all of Oregon
 - o Still need state support as legislation is mostly state wide
 - o BTA pays for a state lobbyist
 - o "Praise loudly, Criticize softly" builds political support
 - o Uses communication for advocacy rather than chains to the mayor's desk
- Focuses on kid's training programs
 - o Grades 4-8
 - o Provides bikes
 - o Week long training how to ride safely in traffic

- Physically disabled kids participate in a tandem or cargo bike
- Funding and Marketing
 - 50% of the website is pro-bono, word press easy to maintain
 - Sell memberships, individual, foundations and corporations
 - Runs the safe routes to schools program for the city and receives funding
 - Gala event - Alice B Toklas
 - 1-2 big rides per year
 - Man service stations
 - Tent on a popular bike route offers drink, snack, minor tune-up, goodie bag
 - Talk about BTA and sell memberships, get 80-100 each time they run it
 - Corporate sponsors for events
 - Corporate bike challenge
 - Corporations compete in categories to see how many employees will bike to work for a week or a month for T-shirt and bragging rights
 - Results tracked on a web-site, BTA licenses tracking software for \$2,500
- Each year they get 2-3,000 people participating who have never cycled to work before
- 40 projects launched in 2005, by 2011 75% of those projects were started or completed
- Pitfalls to avoid
 - Never talk about helmets
 - About ½ of the members are for ½ against
 - Passionate debate head injury vs. making cycling safe enough for all
 - Avoid equating cycling and spandex, cycling is for everyone
 - Avoid trying to do too much
 - Focus on advocacy bike to schools programs (youth)
 - Get road engineers and planners out on bikes to experience cycling challenges firsthand
 - Organize no media bike rides for politicians (1 hr. using folding bikes)
 - Ward rides are good
 - Avoid fanaticism
 - Praise loudly and criticize softly
 - Build support from staff to the mayor not the other way round
 - Both staff and politicians don't want surprises
 - Training and education must include everyone, i.e. use tandem bicycles for physically challenged
- Key Learning
 - Vision
 - People of any age, any comfort level can use a bike to meet their daily transportation needs,
 - Whether it is for commuting, errands, recreation people of Portland need safe, accessible facilities in every community, every neighbourhood and every street in the region
 - All inclusive – biking should be available for everyone (transportation, recreation, tourism, even the disadvantaged and handicap)

- Mission
 - Make Big streets safe
 - Let's fix it
 - Create Neighbourhood greenways
 - Build inspiring trails
- *Visioning*
 - Big vision, neighbourhood implementation
 - Local engagement and communication to residents and stakeholders
 - 1,000 plus survey responses
 - Hundreds of in-person conversations
 - Hundreds of ideas for improved bicycle facilities
 - Narrowed down to 16 projects
 - Specific prioritized projects based on the vision and identification of key routes based on anticipated or actual demand i.e. people to jobs
- Demographics
 - Population – 603,000
 - Under 5 – 6%
 - Under 18 – 19%
 - 65 and over – 10%
 - Mean travel time to work – 24.3 minutes